

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



# SHARING AMERICA'S ABUNDANCE



Report on Five Years of Operation of the  
Direct Distribution Program Making U. S.  
Surplus Foods Available to People at Home  
and Around the World.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DECEMBER 1957  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

# SHARING AMERICA'S ABUNDANCE

"Never in history has a nation been more generous in making its food supply available to the needy than has the United States during the last five years. Donations from our abundance are now going to more than 75 million people in our own land and to other countries around the world. Included are school children, persons in institutions, and needy families here at home; and needy people in nearly a hundred other countries. We are humbly grateful for this blessing of sharing our good fortune with others."

*Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson*

## DOMESTIC DISTRIBUTION

The Direct Distribution Program has given the U. S. Department of Agriculture and State and local governments an opportunity to make constructive use of our agricultural abundance at home. Certain foods acquired by the Department through various purchase programs have been donated to the States, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and to the Territories for use in nonprofit school-lunch programs and for needy persons in charitable institutions and family units. These foods also are made available to alleviate suffering in areas afflicted by natural disasters.

Authority for donation of foods which the Department acquires is derived from the Agricultural Act of 1935, as amended, from the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, and from Section 6 of the National School Lunch Act of 1946.

## Benefits Through School Lunch

The National School Lunch Act authorizes the Department to use a small portion of the funds appropriated each year under the Act to purchase foods which will help schools participating in the National School Program to meet the nutritive requirements of children. Foods purchased under this phase of the direct distribution program are shipped directly from the suppliers to receiving points in each State and Territory. The State distributing agency then arranges for delivery of the foods to schools taking part in the National School Lunch Program.

The Direct Distribution Program also utilizes those foods the Department has acquired in the operation of price-support and surplus removal programs, and which cannot be sold by the Department without disrupting markets.

In donating surplus foods for distribution to eligible recipients in this country, the Department arranges for and finances necessary processing or packaging of the commodities, and pays the cost of transporting them in carload lots to designated receiving points in the States and Territories.



Children in 60,000 U.S. schools enjoy health-giving foods donated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.



Needy families in 40 States are given foods from U. S. surplus stocks.



### States Administer Program

The program is administered by agencies of the State governments, operating under an agreement with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The State agencies order available commodities from the Department's inventories, and arrange for their local receipt and storage and for ultimate distribution to eligible recipients. The State agencies make sure that eligible groups are supplied with foods only as requested, and in amounts that can be utilized effectively. In cooperation with the Department, the agencies help to gain the greatest good from donated foods by providing recipients with information on their proper handling and storage, and by furnishing recipes and menus and suggesting ways to use the foods distributed. The foods donated under the Direct Distribution Program vary widely from time to time. Those foods purchased with funds under the National School Lunch Program vary according to relative nutritive needs of the children, State preferences, and market conditions. Foods available from price-support and surplus-removal operations vary according to market conditions affecting acquisitions under those programs. The State distributing agencies are always fully advised by the Department as to what commodities are currently available.

During the 1957 fiscal year, the Department donated 1.1 billion pounds of surplus food products to the States and Territories. This quantity of food was distributed to 56,000 schools representing over 12 million school children, to about 1,000 institutions feeding approximately one million needy and indigent persons, and to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million needy persons in family units and 336,000 victims of natural disasters.

## Better Health For Many

Through the Direct Distribution Program, the Nation's abundance plays an important role in safeguarding the health and well-being of our school children and in helping to provide for the needy. The donated foods enable the schools with nonprofit lunch programs to meet the nutritive requirements of children. They assist charitable institutions, including hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aging and infirm in providing the less fortunate with an important supplement to their regular diet. Surplus foods assist needy persons in family units to supplement the foods they are able to purchase in regular trade channels. And they provide assistance for victims of such natural disasters as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and drought.

This total operation is carried out jointly by this Department and the State and local governments. It is a gratifying job for those who are directly involved, because its accomplishments express the charitable spirit and philosophy of the American people. The Direct Distribution Program is administered by the Food Distribution Division in USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

### SURPLUS FOODS DONATED FOR DOMESTIC OUTLETS Fiscal Years 1952 through 1957

<u>Commodities</u>	<u>Quantity in Millions of Pounds</u>	<u>Value in Millions of Dollars</u>
Beans, Dry	242	\$ 21
Butter	388	254
Beef Products	288	111
Cheese	336	140
Corn and Cornmeal	175	10
Cottonseed Oil	36	8
Canned Fruits	19	2
Fresh Fruits	44	3
Milk, Nonfat Dry	335	65
Pork Products	188	112
Poultry and Poultry Products	121	51
Rice	153	22
Shortening and Lard	173	35
Vegetables	69	2
Wheat and Wheat Flour	343	24
Other Commodities	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>
Totals	2,922	\$ 863





Surplus foods also are made available to more than a million people in charitable institutions in our country.

#### NUMBER OF PERSONS RECEIVING SURPLUS COMMODITIES IN U.S.

Fiscal Year	Children in School	Persons in Institutions	Needy Persons	Total
1953	9,400,000	1,300,000	100,000	10,800,000
1954	9,700,000	1,400,000	800,000	11,900,000
1955	10,200,000	1,300,000	2,200,000	13,700,000
1956	10,900,000	1,400,000	2,700,000	15,000,000
1957	11,900,000	1,400,000	3,200,000	16,500,000

The above table shows a steady increase in number of school children and needy persons receiving donated foods during the last five years. The increasing figures for schools have resulted from expansion of the number of children taking part in the school lunch program. The increase in number of needy persons receiving donated foods has been made possible through closer cooperation with States and local communities. Millions of people in this country have needed more of our surplus foods, but only in the last few years have States and counties made arrangements for distribution to large numbers of them.

## FOREIGN DISTRIBUTION

The Direct Distribution Program has been the means by which surplus U. S. Government-owned food commodities have been made available to our friends overseas. More than 60 million needy people in 86 foreign countries are receiving a share of our abundance.

Commodities that have been distributed at one time or another since the inception of this program include nonfat dry milk, dried whole eggs, natural and processed cheese, butter, cottonseed oil, shortening, rice, beans, wheat, flour, corn, and corn meal. These foods are made available through USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

Donations under the program have been largely responsible for reducing surpluses to the point where it was necessary to remove most of these commodities from availability for foreign donation. Domestic needs are given first priority, and only those quantities in excess of domestic needs are offered for foreign donation. At the close of 1957 only nonfat dry milk solids, cheese, flour, and corn meal were available.

### Commodities Processed And Packaged

At the outset of the program, commodities were offered to the agencies in original containers, in store at the point of storage in the United States. Agencies were responsible for transportation, storage, and handling costs to final destinations. During the present administration, Congress has provided for reprocessing and packaging of commodities into suitable containers, authorized payment of United States inland freight transportation charges, and reimbursement to agencies for ocean transportation costs when commodities are shipped to approved countries.

Agencies participating in the foreign distribution program operate under agreements with the Commodity Credit Corporation of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. These agreements specify, among other things, that commodities will not be sold or exchanged and will be distributed to needy persons without regard to race, creed, or color.

#### SURPLUS FOODS DONATED BY U. S. FOR FOREIGN DISTRIBUTION Fiscal Years 1953 through 1957

<u>Commodities</u>	<u>Quantity in Millions of Pounds</u>	<u>Value in Millions of Dollars</u>
Beans, Dry	117	\$ 11
Butter and Butter Oil	360	270
Cheese	376	167
Corn and Cornmeal	383	24
Cottonseed Oil	39	9
Milk, Nonfat Dry	1,246	237
Rice	305	46
Shortening	35	8
Wheat and Wheat Flour	808	55
Totals	3,669	\$ 827



## Agencies Distribute Foods

Participating agencies consist for the most part of church affiliated groups and agencies such as the Cooperative for American Remittances to Everywhere (CARE), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the International Red Cross. Agencies are required to be registered with the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid of the International Cooperation Administration and to submit detailed plans of operation and estimates of their needs for each country in which they desire to distribute surplus foods.



Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson and other United States and Japan officials observe children in Japanese classroom eating U. S. surplus foods.



Voluntary agencies for foreign service arrange for distribution of U. S. donated foods to hungry people in nearly a hundred countries around the world.

Plans of operation are then submitted by representatives of the agencies to that country's USO Mission, Consulate or Embassy for preliminary clearance and approval. After a joint review by U. S. Department of Agriculture and International Cooperation Administration representatives in Washington, the program plans and estimates of requirements are cleared through the Interagency Staff Committee on Agricultural Surplus Disposal. Final approval of the application for commodities subsequently submitted by the agency is made by a contracting officer of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Within specified periods set forth in the contract, agencies are required to evidence exportation of the commodity by submission of a copy of the on-board bill of lading. Receipt in the foreign countries is evidenced by an executed Certificate of Foreign Receipt. Distribution in the foreign country is supervised by an American citizen representing the voluntary agency, and the United States Overseas Mission of the International Cooperation Administration or the appropriate Consulate provides the Government supervision.

The Department has received numerous letters from individual recipients in various parts of the world expressing thanks and appreciation for the surplus foods given to them. This appreciation has been much in evidence as representatives of the Department visited foreign countries and observed the many benefits from our donation programs.



People of other countries express their gratitude for food donated from America's abundance.